THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government do not maintain such information.

(c) and (d) A proposal to establish Distance Education Council through an Act of Parliament is under consideration.

UGC grants to Andhra Pradesh

3554. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of U.G.C. grants released to Andhra Pradesh during 2006-07 and 2007-08.

(b) whether such release is in proportion to that of the universities in the other States; and

(c) if not, what are the guidelines for release of such grants to universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), it has released Rs. 70.98 crore in 2006-07 and Rs. 23.82 crore in 2007-08 to universities including institutions 'deemed-to-be-universities' in Andhra Pradesh. The UGC provides financial assistance to eligible universities/colleges which are included under Section 2(f) and declared fit to receive central assistance under Section 12 B of the UGC Act, 1956 as per approved pattern of assistance under various schemes. Allocation of the grants under a Five year Plan by the Commission is not made State-wise, but to various universities/ colleges on the recommendations of the duly constituted expert committees and the availability of overall fund with the UGC. No inter-State comparison can be made because the quantum of grants would depend on the number of State Universities (for which only development grants are given), Central Universities (for which both development and maintenance grants are given) as well as institutions 'deemed-to-be-universities' which are eligible for financial assistance from the UGC. The pattern of assistance is uniform and based on parameters laid down by the Commission from time to time. Universities/Colleges located in educationally backward areas and young universities are given special development grants by the Commission.

Non-provision of free education to SCs and STs

†3555. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poor SC/ST students are not being provided free education in the schools/colleges inspite of the fact that they got land on concessional rates;

(b) the details of the schools/colleges where poor SC/ST students have been provided educational on concessional rates during the last three years; and

(c) the details of action taken by Government against the schools/colleges, in case they are violating the rules?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The 86th Constitutional Amendment provides for free and compulsory elementary education as a Fundamental Right, for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan the State Governments provide free education upto Upper Primary level for all children including SCs and STs. Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas provide free education to SC/ST students. There is no provision of free education in colleges, however, Universities/Colleges have schemes of freeship and Post Matric Scholarship for SC/ST students.

(b) Education is a concurrent subject, primarily comes under the purview of State Governments. The details of schools/colleges where poor SC/ST students are provided education on concessional rates are not centrally maintained.

(c) Does not arise.

Shutting down of NCTE

3556. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has on one side decided to shut down the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and on the another side advertised for the appointment to the post of its Chairman and Vice-chairman;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government proposes to seek the advice of other concerned Ministries and State Governments in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) A Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Sudeep Banerjee, the then Advisor, Ministry of Human Resource Development was appointed to conduct an indepth study of the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), New Delhi and its Regional Offices. The Committee observed *inter-alia* that the functioning of NCTE was not commensurate with the objective of planned and coordinated development of Teacher Education and recommended that the NCTE Act, 1993 should be repealed and all regulatory functions relating to teacher edcuation and teacher education institutions should be vested in the University system. After inter-ministerial consultations the Legislative Department under the Ministry of Law & Justice has been requested to draft the 'Repeal Bill'. Meanwhile, the posts of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, NCTE have fallen vacant. Processes have been initiated to fill up the vacancies.

Physical exercises, yoga and other games in schools

3557. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to introduce physical exercises, yoga and other games as a compulsory subject from primary shool onwards in the country as is being done in many other countries abroad; and